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## "FOOT ROT" CAN BE CURED.

One of the great dangers to the citrus industry is Mal De Goma, or Foot Rot. Dr. T. G. Julian, of Clearwater, one of the best informed growers in the state, was here attending the Horticultural Association last week, and while here visited the News office a number of times. Mr. Julian says he has a positive cure for this much dreaded scourge, he and others having tested the treatment sufficiently to be able to say advisedly that the trees can be made as good as new. The following is "A Treatise on the Original or Primary Cause of Mal De Goma," written by Dr. Julian:

"I do not approach this subject as an iconoclast; to destroy and pull down any previously accepted theory or explode any notion or opinion that anyone may have entertained as to remedies, how and when to cure, but ask you to add to or build one step farther as the primarily immediately contingent to what we see in the manifestations of this dreaded disease, no cure or remedy, but the cause.

The only way I can ask you to forbear and appreciate how I arrived at my conclusions is to outline a history of my experiences, as some are pleased to call "Julian's Theory," and fifteen years ago it was "Julian's Theory," and I will relate to you my experience and observation during that time which I think beyond a reasonable doubt establishes a fact.

Truth and fact are homely and unattractive and always unpopular, but they are unalterable, stubborn things, and will prevail. They are seemingly repugnant to the human mind, and the plainer and simpler they are the more repellant they become.

So, now I am here, not to upset any of your previously accepted theories, but in very plain phrases to tell you of the things I have seen, and my experiences in the last fifteen years in successfully combating this dread disease known as Mal De Goma, or Foot Rot, which disease to mention in connection with an orange grove meant sure death and the value of the whole grove all but wiped out to such an extent that you could hardly get a grower to even talk about it for fear some one would conjecture he had the dreaded disease in his grove and it would pass along the ways.

Sure enough, when Mr. Wright, the editor of the Grower, was over in our county he spent some thirty or forty minutes in my grove, and wrote a very intelligent description of what I showed him as to my labors in this line, and the only criticism elicited from any one was from Marion A. McAdow, who said some doctor up in the state somewhere who had had a great deal of trouble with Foot Rot, had an idea, just an idea, that it was from lapping of the roots, etc.

Now, the facts are that I have had no more trouble than any one else with the same number of old, bearing seedling trees. I can say that my work has been exceedingly interesting, if not a pleasure, when from symptoms well recognized even at a distance, I knew the cause and had a definite idea what to do to bring relief.

Right here I want to impress upon every one connected directly or indirectly in any way interested in the sustained prosperity of south Florida, the orange culture is FIRST, even before the much bolstered and flickering "celery." When you allow all the old seedling orange trees to die, to go by the Foot Rot route, you part company with the best and catchiest phrase the state ever had, "Sweet Florida Oranges," the fruit of which the world offers nothing in comparison.

## The Foot Rot.

When I came to Florida some score of years or more before the freezes of December, 1894, and February, 1905, I heard from more than one source that a seedling orange grove was next to worthless and not to be desired, as you would spend many years in raising them, and as they would come into bearing they would die from Foot Rot. The very next winter season the two freezes occurred, and even in the most favored localities of the state practically all of the groves that were left were the seedlings, and subsequent writers added proof to show their greater immunity from low temperatures.

Then it fell to my lot to go into the orange business and to choose between disaster of freeze or ravages of Mal De Goma. The latter offered me at least a few days of grace, so I bought the seedling groves and determined to fight the Foot Rot; but as is usual with all new buyers, I was very careful to buy groves not affected with the disease, as it was held in great fear, as one tree showing signs of it, it mattered not the extent of the grove, it was generally passed by and not to be considered at all. It so happened that upon the third place I bought (excellent in many ways) there was one tree badly affected with as they termed it, "Foot Rot," and I was advised by venerable old friend who spent nearly half a century in raising orange groves and working in them, to dig this one tree up and haul it out in the woods and burn it, taking the dirt around it too, because the

dirt was contaminated with a fungus which had produced the disease of Mal De Goma in the tree, and there was no cure. All of which I promised to do.

Further, it would permeate the whole ground and infect all of the trees of the grove. For some reason I did not get to this as early as I had expected, and in the following spring, fertilizing the grove, I made a personal investigation, and in digging I found two large roots, rotten and gone, but enough of them left to show that they crossed one another very close in or almost immediately after leaving the body or trunk of the tree. Getting back a few feet you could readily see, at least I thought at that time that I could see, following directly up the fiber of the trunk of the tree to two or more large limbs, which also were dead. It appeared to my mind that this case of Foot Rot was certainly local as to this tree, and was the fiber of the trunk the connecting link between the dead roots and the dead limbs that showed a variation from the generally accepted theory of encircling the trunk at crown roots.

## Every Evil Influence.

Upon further digging and cutting away of rotten wood and seeing the havoc wrought to that once great, fine tree, I was in a frame of mind to deny nothing, the germ theory, the fungus theory, or the sour sap theory, as any child could see that they were all present, in fact, abundance of evidence was there that every evil influence in nature was present, and had left their devastating mark upon this once monarch of the grove, the production of which counts or is equivalent to a generation of man.

I never thought of a remedy, it seemed past all remedial agencies, so near death. It did occur to my mind that back beyond all this destruction was certainly a malfactor of constitutional formation. Here the proposition confronts you, the cause. The effect is plain and can be seen not to be denied, but the cause, "there is the rub." The proposition is, has been and will be to the end of time, to divine the cause and define the law.

As to the sour sap and fungus theory, both evidently present but here burrowing between the bark and the wood in the rich carbonated sap, the course of which would be the way of least resistance, and this, inversely, would allow it in the weakest part of the circulation of the tree. Thus it manifests itself at the change from the perpendicular to the horizontal plane, or where a free flow of sap is restricted, as in the crotch of roots and limbs. But here is the question: How did either or both get in there (in their well protected berth) and I don't believe any one at all acquainted with modern scientific research would deny that there is a way of reason for their entrance, as the fundamental scientific principle which so well established this point is:

That there must be connection (actual contact) before infection.

## A Fermentation.

At the same time we know that sour sap is a fermentation and the nature and very inertia of fungus growth the very lowest order of vegetable life. The way—an opening—an abrasion—to allow either to enter into the very life blood of this highest type or order of the vegetable kingdom must have been open because the bark, by nature, is designed to protect from outer influences, then the cause of this abrasion or break in the bark could only be determined by the collection of many specific cases to determine the one general type or factor as the cause. I say unreservedly that in every case there was plainly to be seen generally a small root over lapping and binding (as cording a limb or finger of the human body), the large and rigid root, thereby stopping, impeding the natural flow and circulation. Now it behooves you to conceive of the force exerted, not by a normal flow of sap, for the law of compensation would adjust such conditions, but an abnormal flow produced by over ammoniacal application of fertilizer and cultivation followed by heavy rains, and it is easy to conceive the great force to be exerted at any given point under such conditions to produce the break or abrasion, thereby allowing the entrance of these foul enemies to their well protected berths to despoil upon the very life blood of the tree unto its death.

Now, I am here to say that, of many cases, dozens of them, and covering a period of fifteen or sixteen years, there was present in each and every case, this binding, cording or larger and rigid roots by very much smaller ones (even to the size of a pencil), and upon closer investigation readily to be seen that the contact was the beginning and seat of the trouble. You can readily see that every contributing cause, taken in connection with our coarse and porous, sandy soil that suffers the tree to the excesses of the seasons, when it is dry it is very dry, until it endangers the very life of the tree, and then in a few days the reverse nature would take care of those conditions if there had not been applied the rich ammoniacal fertilizer

to help sustain the tree and bear fruit during these ordeals of drouth, and vascillating between the two extremes is where the danger lies and the abnormal conditions arise.

## Treat and Push Them.

Now, you can not make a seedling tree or grove be as remunerative as a budded tree or grove unless you treat and push them with highly ammoniacal fertilizer. There is the paradox; unless the cause is removed, and in removing the cause you have a preventive.

I think there is enough difference to warrant separating into three classes.

First, where it affects the crown roots near the surface, and the ordinary cleaning of the dirt from the crown roots will efface the trouble, and this embraces the majority of cases, but if you do not find the conditions present on the major crown roots, and there of course you must exercise your judgment as to whether you have reached the seat of the trouble; if not, keep digging and come to the second class.

Second, where it affects the roots below the crown, from six to twelve or fifteen inches deeper.

Third, where it affects the tap root, thereby rendering a very complex proposition, hard to get at or determine when you are at the seat of the trouble.

Now, I know nothing of "wilt" and have never seen a case, but have seen several that others have termed "wilt," and in each case turned out to be Mal De Goma of this last or third class, which seems to affect the whole tree simultaneously.

In a general way take into consideration all of the conditions contributing to Mal De Goma, setting too low, below the level of the surface, along with mulching heavily, either or both superinduces a multiplicity of rootlets too close to the tree that in after years are sure to cause trouble. Cow penning in spring months to be followed by the rainy season of summer, or the use of too much nitrate of soda in commercial fertilizer, or any other source of nitrogen that all become available under the same conditions, excepting only sulphate of ammonia, which is considered to become available more slowly as if by contact.

As cures or relief, to clear the dirt away from the crown roots, which if done properly will relieve those causes as described in class one, secondly, stop cow penning and cultivating. Pull down fences and let grove revert to natural conditions; thirdly, apply ground sulphuric acid promiscuously to kill fungus, and fourthly, still another marvelous cure is to put a stick or charge of dynamite under the tree. If the patient survives, it is a cure. This is in line with the old custom of boring a hole through the trunk and with a block and tackle raise the tree six or eight inches, as the origin of the trouble was deep setting, but in fact, in doing so perchance, altered the position by breaking loose and relieving the condition which was the cause of the trouble.

## Prune the Roots.

In doing this you followed a well recognized custom and beaten path as old as the hills. Prune the roots. That is all, except that you do it with the single idea of removing the smaller roots that have the binding effect on the larger ones, or soon will have, exceeding ordinary good judgment.

I want to mention that roots of a china berry tree sprout produced disease.

Care is needed, especially when you are to protect a small and limited area extending twenty or thirty inches out from the tree, as further the rigidity of the roots lessens, and therefore lessens the danger of the bind.

I have never used any of the usual remedies, such as lime sulphur and carbolineum, but simply removed the offending root and scraped clean the wound, then the disease disappears and the tree becomes healthy and regains its normal vigor. In two of three instances in a year or so after becoming affected, in some roots, so I believe it, for the second time.

I neglected one so long that all of the roots and all of the limbs were dead, just the latent life left in the trunk or body of the tree, and now it has had four or five crops, good sized tops and bearing surface. Other trees losing a part or even half the top are now filled out symmetrical with the balance of the tree, and you would not suppose that any trouble ever existed.

So, from my experience and observation, to allow an orange tree to die of Mal De Goma or Foot Rot seems neglectfulness and indifference to self interest. (I won't mention the real cause, as it is a falling of the human race, and especially in Florida.)

When you have protected a seedling orange tree or grove from this one malady, you have a real tree or grove, not scrub and bush, and is more suited to different kinds of soil and repellant to more trouble than budded trees seem affected by, and it would improve the quality of the budded trees if it could be used as budding stock."

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## THE SOUTH FLORIDA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Will Hold Its Next Meeting at Lakeland, Fla., on Wednesday, May 10th, at 10 a. m.

The following communication has just been received from Mr. W. P. Miller, president of the South Florida Chamber of Commerce:

Dear Sir:—  
The next meeting of the South Florida Chamber of Commerce will be held at Lakeland, Florida, on Wednesday, May 10th, at 10 a. m.

We expect to have delegates from fifty to seventy-five civic and commercial organizations present, and your community cannot afford to miss this meeting.

Many matters of importance will be brought up for action, and we need your co-operation and assistance to make the South Florida Chamber of Commerce all that it can be made.

A personal and earnest invitation is hereby extended to you to be present at the next meeting of the South Florida Chamber of Commerce, which will be held at Lakeland, Florida, on Wednesday, May 10th, at the hour of 10 a. m.

I know that you are interested in the welfare of your city—your county and south Florida—therefore you cannot afford to miss this meeting. Yours for a greater and united south Florida,

W. P. MILLER,  
President.

## No. 666

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